DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 449 369 CE 081 313

AUTHOR Watts, A. G.; Sadler, Jackie

TITLE Quality Guidance: A Sectoral Analysis. NICEC Project Report.

INSTITUTION National Inst. for Careers Education and Counselling, Cambridge (England).; Careers Research and Advisory Centre, Cambridge (England).
SPONS AGENCY Guidance Accreditation Board, Birmingham (England).
PUB DATE 2000-04-00
NOTE 38p.
AVAILABLE FROM National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling, Sheraton House, Castle Park, Cambridge, CB3 0AX; Tel: 01223 460277; Fax: 01223 311708; E-mail: enquiries@crac.org.uk; Web site: http://www.crac.org.uk.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Articulation (Education); Career Education; *Career Guidance; Community Programs; Definitions; Developed Nations; *Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; Employment Services; Financial Support; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Job Training; Partnerships in Education; Postsecondary Education; Program Effectiveness; *Quality Control; *Standards
IDENTIFIERS *United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

This report reviews the structure of the guidance field and provides a sector-by-sector analysis of current quality assurance arrangements in the United Kingdom. Part 1 presents an outline of the guidance sector, including some key concepts, structures, and roles. It defines guidance and other terms; discusses the three main categories (education/training-based, employment-based, and independent guidance); describes representative bodies in the guidance sector; addresses two current structural changes (Connexions Service and the Learning and Skills Council); analyzes strengths of, weaknesses of, opportunities for, and threats facing the guidance sector; and discusses two key issues in the guidance sector (harmonization and funding). Part 2 provides a sector-by-sector analysis of current quality assurance arrangements. It discusses principles underpinning good quality guidance and development of Guidance Council Quality Standards (GCQS). Existing quality standards of schools; further education; higher education; training provision; employment-based guidance provision; Career Services; Employment Service; local authority provision; community-based provision; private sector guidance and employment agencies; partnership arrangements; Wales; Scotland; Northern Ireland; and the wider international context are analyzed with a view toward using GCQS outside the adult guidance sector. Appendixes include 22 references and glossary. (YLB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original document.

NICEC PROJECT REPORT

ED 449 369

QUALITY GUIDANCE

A SECTORAL ANALYSIS

BY

A.G. WATTS
AND
JACKIE SADLER

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

A. G Watts

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

CE 081313

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CRAC

Quality assurance is a critical issue for all services offering guidance for learning and work. The Guidance Accreditation Board has been established to accredit information, advice and guidance providers to the quality standards developed by the Guidance Council. These standards now have an officially endorsed role in relation to information, advice and guidance for adults in England. They could also have a valuable role to play in other sectors, and other parts of the United Kingdom. This report reviews the structure of the guidance field and provides a sector-by-sector analysis of current quality-assurance arrangements.

Tony Watts is Director of NICEC

Jackie Sadler is a NICEC Associate

GAB

This report was prepared for the Guidance Accreditation Board by NICEC.

NICEC

The National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC) is a network organisation initiated and supported by CRAC. It conducts applied research and development work related to guidance in educational institutions and in work and community settings. Its aim is to develop theory, inform policy and enhance practice through staff development, organisation development, curriculum development, consultancy and research.

CRAC

The Careers Research and Advisory Centre is a registered educational charity and independent development agency founded in 1964. Its education and training programmes, publications and sponsored projects provide links between the worlds of education and employment. CRAC has sponsored NICEC since 1975.

CRAC, Sheraton House, Castle Park, Cambridge CB3 0AX
Tel 01223 460277 Fax 01223 311708 E-mail enquiries@crac.org.uk

© GAB 2000

QUALITY GUIDANCE

A Sectoral Analysis

A.G. WATTS
AND
JACKIE SADLER

4

CRAC

Contents

		Page
Foreword		v
Executive Summary		vii
I	**The Guidance Sector**	1
1	Definitions	1
2	Structure of the sector	3
3	Roles	5
4	Representative bodies	6
5	Current structural changes	8
6	The UK context	9
7	The wider international context	9
8	SWOT analysis	10
9	Key issues	11
II	**Quality Assurance in the Guidance Sector**	13
10	Introduction	13
11	The role of guidance professional bodies	14
12	Principles underpinning "good quality" guidance	14
13	The development of the Guidance Council Quality Standards	14
14	Quality standards in schools	16
15	Quality standards in further education	18
16	Quality standards in higher education	19
17	Quality standards in training provision	20
18	Quality standards in employment-based guidance provision	21
19	Quality standards in the Careers Service	21
20	Quality standards in the Employment Service	23
21	Quality standards in local-authority provision	24
22	Quality standards in community-based provision	25
23	Quality standards in private-sector guidance and employment agencies	26
24	Partnership arrangements	26
25	Quality standards in Wales	27
26	Quality standards in Scotland	28
27	Quality standards in Northern Ireland	29
28	Quality standards in the wider international context	29
29	Conclusion	30
References		31
Glossary		32

Foreword

This is a time of massive change in the field of guidance for learning and work. The replacement of the Careers Service by the new ConneXions service, and the replacement of the Training and Enterprise Councils by the Learning and Skills Councils, are likely to produce wide-ranging changes in the structures through which such guidance is provided.

The Guidance Accreditation Board has been established to accredit providers of information, advice and guidance on learning and work opportunities to the Guidance Council Quality Standards. It will be affected by, but will also have an important role to play in, the transition to the new arrangements. It has an officially endorsed role in relation to information, advice and guidance for adults in England. It also has opportunities to support the application of the Guidance Council Quality Standards in other sectors, and other parts of the UK.

This report was commissioned by the Board as a briefing document for Board members; it has now been published to make it available to a wider audience. It is in two parts. The first part presents an outline of the guidance sector, including some of the key concepts, structures and roles. The second part provides a sector-by-sector analysis of current quality-assurance arrangements. The information was collected in January-February 2000.

We would like to express our thanks to the Board, for commissioning the report and supporting its publication. We are also grateful to the various individuals and organisations that have helped us in producing the report. In particular, we wish to thank Lynda Ali, David Andrews, Gary Bollington, Rodney Buse, Guy Daines, Chris Evans, Geoff Ford, Hilary Fowler, Cynthia Gittins, Ruth Hawthorn, Wendy Hirsh, Heather Jackson, Carol Jamieson, Linda Miller, Richard Presland, Anna Reisenberger and Ellie Stevenson, plus representatives of the various guidance professional associations.

Jackie Sadler
Tony Watts
April 2000

Executive Summary

1 "Guidance" is sometimes used as a generic term to cover a range of processes designed to help individuals make informed choices and transitions related to their learning and work. Sometimes it is used more specifically to describe in-depth interviews or small-group sessions, differentiating these from "information" and "advice".

2 The main current guidance provision in the UK can be divided into three main categories: education/training-based guidance (schools, further education, higher education, training provision); employment-based guidance; and "independent" guidance (Careers Service, Employment Service, local-authority provision, community-based provision and private-sector guidance and employment agencies).

3 Current structural changes that are likely to have major effects in the guidance sector are the new Connexions service and the new Learning and Skills Councils. With devolution, there is growing policy diversity between different parts of the United Kingdom.

4 Key issues relate to harmonisation between youth and adult provision, and uncertainties about funding of services.

5 There has been growing attention to quality assurance within the guidance sector. A wide variety of methods and systems are currently in use: these are outlined in detail in the report. Several of the nine guidance professional bodies have produced codes of practice. The Guidance Council's *Code of Principles* reflect a general consensus regarding good practice.

6 The Guidance Council Quality Standards and the Guidance Accreditation Board's approach to accreditation are designed to cover all sectors of guidance provision; because the standards were developed by practitioners, they have considerable professional credibility. Their DfEE endorsement is currently confined to adult guidance in receipt of public funding.

7 If the Guidance Council standards are to be used elsewhere, they will almost certainly need to be reconciled with the existing quality arrangements in the various sectors. Many of these arrangements are concerned primarily with public accountability. They are therefore in principle complementary to the Guidance Council standards, which are concerned primarily with guidance from the client's viewpoint. A possible model for quality harmonisation is provided by higher education, where the relevant professional body is seeking to align its standards with the Guidance Council's, and both are being officially endorsed.

8 There are possibilities for the Guidance Council standards and the Guidance Accreditation Board's accreditation processes to be applied in other parts of the United Kingdom and possibly even internationally. Again, however, careful negotiation will be required.

I The Guidance Sector

1 Definitions

1.1 Confusingly, the term "guidance" is used both as a *generic* term, and as a term to describe a *specific* activity.

1.2 In its *generic* usage, a broad definition of "guidance" is that it covers a range of processes designed to help individuals make informed choices and transitions related to their learning and work. An influential list of such processes was developed by the Unit for the Development of Adult Continuing Education (1986): informing, advising, counselling, assessing, enabling, advocating and feeding back. This tended, however, to detach guidance from learning provision.

1.3 Subsequently, the Standing Conference of Associations for Guidance in Educational Settings (1993) produced an expanded list which included "teaching" (defined in guidance-specific terms) and also added managerial activities designed to co-ordinate guidance activities and integrate them into learning contexts. Although the SCAGES list (Figure 1) was developed for use in educational settings, it is in principle transferable to other settings too, including work and community settings.

Figure 1: Guidance activities

Informing: Providing information about opportunities available, without any discussion of the relative merits of options for particular individuals.

Advising: Helping learners to interpret information and choose the most appropriate option. To benefit from advice, individuals must already have a fairly clear idea of what their needs are.

Counselling: Working with learners as individuals to help them to discover, clarify, assess and understand their own experience, and to explore alternatives and their possible implementation. Counselling is a purposeful activity deliberately entered into by both the learner and counsellor, and is learner-led. It may involve a series of regular contacts.

Assessing: Helping learners, by formal or informal means, to obtain a structured understanding of their personal, educational and vocational development, in order to enable them to make informed judgements about the appropriateness of particular opportunities.

Teaching: Providing a planned and systematic progression of learner-centred experiences to enable learners to acquire knowledge, skills and competences related to making personal, educational and career decisions and transitions.

Enabling: Supporting learners in dealing with agencies providing or influencing learning/employment opportunities. This may, for example, involve helping learners with making applications, or negotiating changes in arrangements.

Advocating: Negotiating directly with institutions or agencies on behalf of specific learners for whom there may be additional barriers to access (e.g. negotiating exceptional entry arrangements).

Networking: Establishing specific links with a range of individuals and agencies to support and enhance guidance work with learners. These links may be formal or informal, but will include regular contact for information exchange, client referral and feedback, and other joint activities such as staff development, monitoring and review, and outreach work.

Feeding back: Gathering and collating information on the unmet needs of learners, and encouraging providers of opportunities to respond by adapting or developing their provision. This may involve practical changes (e.g. in presentation of information) or organisational ones (e.g. redesigning opportunities to meet the needs of particular learner groups).

Managing: Managing guidance activities into a coherent programme, ensuring it is sustainable within its institutional or organisational setting, co-ordinating and developing its human and physical resources, evaluating its effectiveness, and promoting its service and interests.

Innovating/systems change: Supporting the development of curriculum, changes in institutional practice and changes in guidance practice, in order to maintain and improve the quality of both educational and guidance provision.

1.4 The activities in the SCAGES list can be divided into four main groups:

a Activities (e.g. informing, advising, assessing) designed to provide structured input into the *content* of decisions.

b Activities (e.g. counselling, enabling) focused on the *processes* of choices and transitions, designed to help individuals to manage these processes for themselves.

c Activities (e.g. advocating, feeding back) designed to *change learning/work provision* to meet the needs of individuals.

d *Support* activities (e.g. networking, managing).

1.5 Some, however, use "guidance" in more *specific* terms, differentiated from such areas as "information" and "advice". Indeed, this has in recent years become the common form of usage in government policy documents, particularly in relation to provision for adults. In these terms, commonly-used working definitions are:

a *Information:* data on learning and work opportunities conveyed through printed matter, audio-visual materials or computer software, or through information officers in careers services or helpline services such as Learndirect.

b *Advice:* providing an immediate response to the needs of clients who present an enquiry or reveal a need that requires more than a straightforward information response. This is usually limited to helping with the interpretation of information and with meeting needs already clearly understood by the client, and may or may not include signposting to a guidance interview where a more in-depth response can be provided.

c *In-depth guidance:* an interview or small-group session conducted by a trained adviser which helps clients to explore a range of options, to relate information to their own needs and circumstances, and to make decisions about their career – i.e. their progression in learning and/or work. This may or may not include psychometric assessment.

This leaves open the recognition that "guidance" can also be used more broadly to describe guidance given by individuals other than guidance professionals (see Section 3 below).

1.6 A number of other distinctions are important in understanding the guidance sector:

a Between *educational* guidance and *vocational* guidance. Educational guidance mainly addresses choices relating to learning (especially within formal education); vocational guidance mainly addresses choices relating to work (especially formal employment). In practice, such choices are often closely interwoven, and much guidance is concerned with their interrelationship. "Career" guidance is sometimes used as a synonym for vocational guidance, but sometimes as an umbrella term which covers progression in both learning and work. There has however been a tendency for educational guidance to become institutionalised in a separate form – particularly within colleges and universities, and in educational guidance for adults. In part this is caused by its origins in a different tradition (encouraging adults back into learning); in part with professional territory; in part with seeking to resist the incursions of vocationalism into educational concerns. The tradition invokes the legitimacy of non-vocational motivations for learning, including intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivations (though a broad definition of career guidance can embrace such motivations).

b Between *directive* and *non-directive* approaches. Prior to the 1960s, guidance tended to be directive in nature, and focused heavily on assessment and advice-giving. More recently, there has been greater emphasis on a less directive approach in which the task has been seen as being to facilitate individuals' decision-making processes and develop their own decision-making skills, and which accordingly lays more emphasis on counselling and on "teaching" as defined in Figure 1 (e.g. careers education).

c Between guidance as *part of learning* (helping individuals to relate their learning to their career aspirations), as itself a *learning process* (developing career management skills, for example), and as an activity which needs to stand as a *separate process outside learning* (to help individuals decide in which learning programmes to engage). These distinctions are linked to (a) and (b) above.

d Between *guidance* and *placement*. Some guidance services include placement into specific jobs. Others, however, do not. Sometimes placement activities are viewed as being incompatible with guidance because they need to attend at least as much to the needs of the employer as to the needs of individuals. The tension is most evident where placement includes a strong pre-

selection filtering process, which can be viewed as a "gatekeeper" function that can restrict the opportunities open to particular individuals. Some guidance services which include placement accordingly adopt a weaker form of placement provision, in which they make available information on vacancies but leave individuals to apply where they wish, only seeking to influence such decisions through the general guidance process.

2 Structure of the sector

2.1 The main current guidance provision in the UK can be divided into three main categories:

a Education/training-based guidance.

b Employment-based guidance.

c "Independent" guidance.

A detailed historical and conceptual analysis of the development of such provision is provided in Watts *et al.* (1996).

2.2 *Education/training-based guidance*. This comprises:

a *Careers education and guidance in schools*. Careers teachers in schools had a limited role until the emergence in the 1970s of careers education programmes within the curriculum. Under the Education Act 1997, schools are now required to provide careers education to all pupils in years 9 to 11 (ages 13-16), to provide access to the Careers Service, and to provide up-to-date careers information. Most schools have a careers co-ordinator, who normally also has other subject teaching responsibilities. Careers education is incorporated into the curriculum in various ways, but most commonly as part of personal and social education programmes, which are linked to the tutorial structure or taught by teams of teachers. Schools also have work-experience programmes (usually one or two weeks) and programmes of recording achievement and action planning. Tutors may play an important role in relation to the latter programme, and also in relation to subject choices. There is growing interest in career-related learning prior to year 9, including primary schools. Schools are encouraged to form partnership agreements with the Careers Service (see 2.4a), to identify their respective roles in the planning and delivery of the school's careers programme.

b *Careers education and guidance in further education*. Traditionally, further education was the educational sector in which guidance was least well developed, largely because most of its courses were vocational in nature, and it was assumed that students had made a vocational commitment prior to entry. With the growth of academic and pre-vocational courses, and subsequently of more flexible modular structures, this has changed. Attention to guidance is now mandated prior to, during and on exit from learning programmes as part of the Further Education Funding Council's funding and inspection procedures. Particular attention is paid to guidance on entry, to ensure that learners are enrolled on programmes that meet their needs. On-course and exit guidance can include individual interviews with advisers from the Careers Service (see 2.4a) or from careers specialists in the college (usually part of a student services team which typically also covers welfare advice, financial advice, advice for international students, and accommodation matters: in smaller colleges, a number of these roles may be combined). It also includes the support of a tutor, work on records of achievement, and work experience, as well as a careers education curriculum. Provision, however, varies considerably within as well as between colleges. Services for part-time students tend to be more limited than for full-time students.

c *Careers advisory services in higher education*. The first university appointments boards can be traced back to 1892; by the mid-1950s, all universities had such boards; in the late 1960s and early 1970s, they evolved into careers advisory services. Almost all higher education institutions have such a service, staffed by full-time professionals. Their core activities are information, individual and group guidance, and employer liaison and placement. Many services have moved away from long interviews towards a more flexible range of provision, including short interviews in the information room, and running career management programmes within the curriculum, usually in collaboration with teaching departments. The staffing ratio can vary from 1,000 to over 7,000 full-time students per careers adviser. Careers services are part of a range of guidance services within higher education institutions which also include counselling services, tutorial programmes, access provision, etc.

d *Guidance offered by training providers*. Guidance elements have often been incorporated into government-funded training schemes for young people and adults. Usually these have placed particular emphasis on assessment. Schemes for young people have commonly included some support from the Careers Service (see 2.4a).

2.3 *Employment-based guidance*. In the last couple of decades, a growing number of employers have begun to provide support to their employees in managing their careers. These include development reviews (as part of, or separate from, appraisal systems), career planning workshops, individual career counselling, self-assessment materials, development centres, and mentoring programmes. Much of this is provided in-house: outplacement counselling tends to be externally purchased. Provision is inclined to be skewed towards large organisations, and towards white-collar and managerial staff. Some employers have however extended such programmes to the whole workforce, sometimes as part of employee development programmes. A number of trade unions are now not only advocating such provision but also directly providing learning advice for their own members.

2.4 *"Independent" guidance*. This comprises guidance provision which is independent of educational institutions and of employers. It includes:

a *Careers Service*. The roots of the Careers Service were the Juvenile Employment Offices established in the early years of the 20th century; in 1948 these evolved into the Youth Employment Service, which in turn became the Careers Service in 1973. Funded by the Department for Education and Employment, it is required by legislation to secure the provision of career guidance and placement services to all full-time students of whatever age (other than those in higher education) and part-time students on courses to fit them for employment (again other than those in higher education) plus any young people aged under 21 who have left education up to two years previously. It was formerly a mandatory Local Education Authority service, but following the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993 was contracted out: most contracts went to existing providers, reconstituted as partnerships between LEAs and Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs); some went to Careers Service providers from other areas; some went to new providers (notably CfBT and Nord Anglia). An important part of its role is to support guidance programmes within education/training provision for young people (see 2.2 above). Most careers services also provide services for adults: these are funded or subsidised from a variety of sources.

b *Employment Service*. The main functions of the Employment Service are to provide a placement service for adults, and to administer benefits associated with unemployment. Its Occupational Guidance Service was disbanded in 1980/81. In more recent years, the service's potential to develop as a guidance provider has been limited not only by its "policing" role in relation to benefits but also by the imposition of employment or special-programme enrolment targets. Under the Government's New Deal programme, however, more attention has been given to individual casework. The Gateway element of the New Deal programme for those aged 18-24 provides guidance opportunities, as do (to a lesser extent) the New Deal programmes for older individuals and for specific groups (e.g. lone parents); also relevant here are Jobclubs and short courses and workshops designed to support the unemployed in returning to work.

c *Local-authority provision*. From the late 1960s, a number of Educational Guidance Services for Adults (EGSAs) grew up, often supported by Local Education Authorities, and drawing on various sources of funding. They tended to have close links with adult education services, and were often managed by them. Their focus was on educational rather than employment choices, and particularly on supporting those re-entering education. Shifts in funding over recent years have seen many of these independent free-standing services disappear. In some cases, they have been merged into careers services (see 2.4a), or into further education institutions (see 2.2b) some of which provide a guidance service not only for their own students but also for members of the local community. EGSAs were often instrumental in developing local adult guidance networks: these tended later to be taken over by TECs. The networks sometimes include public library services, which regularly handle information enquiries on learning and work options.

d *Community-based provision*. Adult guidance is provided less formally in community settings. These vary from information and signposting services undertaken by professionals in other roles (e.g. health and social workers), through agencies with a broad remit to provide a wide range of guidance and support services to clients (of which guidance for learning and work forms only a part), to guidance delivered through such initiatives as family learning centres,

neighbourhood projects, and community education programmes. Many serve very specific communities or are targeted at particular groups (e.g. "third age" groups). Such guidance tends to be relaxed and informal, and to take place at venues people already go to, are familiar with, and are non-threatening. Some of it is undertaken by professionals; some by volunteers.

e *Private-sector guidance and employment agencies.* The main area of private-sector guidance provision is outplacement agencies, which receive contracts from employers to provide a service to individuals as part of managed redundancy programmes. Some of these companies also provide support to employers in their career management programmes; some offer services to individuals independently of an employer. Other guidance agencies focus on providing individual guidance services, often based on psychometric testing: these include individual guidance practitioners in private practice. Recruitment and employment agencies offer specialist advice on specific occupational sectors. Given their high-profile high-street locations, they are often the first port-of-call for adults seeking career progression. Their involvement in local guidance networks has tended to be limited to making and receiving referrals, although recent market research carried out for the Guidance Council suggests that clients want greater access to occupational specialists.

3 Roles

3.1 Many practitioners in the guidance field are primarily members of other professional groups – e.g. teachers, psychologists, managers, labour-market administrators. In these cases, their guidance training is often regarded as having been incorporated into, or as supplementary to, their training within their primary profession. It is only a fairly limited number of individuals who are defined primarily as guidance specialists, with their own specialist training. This explains why in the past some guidance training has been *limited* (lasting a few weeks or even a few days), on an *in-service* basis (rather than being required before undertaking any guidance practice), and even *optional* in nature. The recent trend, however, has been for it to become more extensive and more structured.

3.2 A distinction can be drawn between:

a Guidance specialists.

b Individuals who provide guidance as part of another formal role (e.g. teacher, supervisor).

c Informal sources of guidance (e.g. friends and relations).

Linked with the classification in Section 2, this suggests the matrix outlined in Figure 2. Issues relating to professionalism and quality tend to be addressed mainly to (a), though they may extend to (b), and may also include the role of (a) in supporting the quality of (b) and (c).

Figure 2: A matrix of guidance provision (with examples)

	(a) *Guidance specialist*	*(b)* *Part of other formal role*	*(c)* *Informal*
Education/training-based	Careers adviser (HE)	Tutor	Fellow-student
Employment-based	Career development manager	Manager/supervisor	Work colleague
"Independent"	Careers adviser (Careers Service)	Community worker	Friend, relation

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

4 Representative bodies

4.1 The main representative body in the guidance sector is the *National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance* – commonly abbreviated to "the Guidance Council". The Council was formed in 1994, initially under the joint aegis of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) and the Confederation of British Industry (CBI); it is now a separate legal entity, registered as a charity. It brings together all of the major national representative organisations in the sector, including not only the relevant professional associations (see below) but also "stakeholder" organisations representing employers and education/training institutions, plus observers from relevant government departments. Its primary concern is to ensure that all guidance provision meets the needs of individual clients. Its main roles are:

a To develop and maintain *quality standards* (which provide the basis for the work of the Guidance Accreditation Board).

b To *promote* wider understanding of the nature and significance of guidance for learning and work.

c To provide *strategic leadership* in the field of guidance, including advice to government and others.

4.2 The *Guidance Accreditation Board* was established in 1999 to accredit providers of information, advice and guidance on learning and work opportunities to the Guidance Council Quality Standards. The Board is wholly responsible for the design, implementation and operation of its accreditation process. Over the next few years it will assess providers from the public sector, the voluntary sector, the further education sector and the private sector, and where appropriate will award its national Quality Mark. This will indicate to clients and prospective clients that accredited providers have been inspected and approved; it will be promoted as the sign of quality-assured service provision. In addition, the Board will collect and collate information on the sector and will produce thematic reports and statistics.

4.3 The Guidance Council and the Guidance Accreditation Board are separate but mutually supporting organisations. The Guidance Council is responsible for the development of standards, advising on their implementation within organisations and developing continuous quality improvement activities in the sector. On the other hand, the Board is responsible for the assessment and random inspection of providers, the award of its Quality Mark, and the receipt of fees from applicants and accredited providers. The level of fees is agreed jointly by the Guidance Council and the Board each January for the ensuing year commencing 1 April.

4.4 The Board is responsible for determining the form in which evidence of compliance is to be submitted and by what means. It will determine the sanctions to be applied in cases where organisations fall short of the evidence requirements. It will also determine which providers are delivering a service to the required levels or otherwise: its decisions could mean that public funds may not be available to some providers. The Board will establish an independent appeals process for review of its decisions.

4.5 The work of the Guidance Council and the Guidance Accreditation Board in relation to organisational quality standards is complemented by the work of *CAMPAG* in developing National Occupational Standards and associated National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications. The occupational areas for which CAMPAG is responsible include, but extend well beyond, those covered by the Guidance Council: they comprise guidance, advice, advocacy, counselling, mediation and psychotherapy. CAMPAG evolved from the Advice, Guidance, Counselling and Psychotherapy Lead Body, which was set up in 1992. A research project commissioned by CAMPAG in 1999 suggested that around a million individuals work within the scope of CAMPAG's remit. Following an OFSTED report, CAMPAG was also invited to develop National Occupational Standards for careers education and guidance in schools and colleges: these standards have now been accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and by the Scottish Qualifications Authority. CAMPAG is not a National Training Organisation (NTO) but is currently establishing its position within the national framework of NTOs. The CAMPAG constituents want the integrity of the Standards Setting Body and its National Occupational Standards to be maintained. CAMPAG is therefore seeking a form of alliance with an existing compatible NTO where both organisations will benefit from the association.

4.6 The main professional associations in the guidance sector are listed in Figure 3. In addition, some guidance practitioners belong to bodies like the British Psychological Society (BPS) (if they are also qualified psychologists) and the Institute of Personnel and Development (IPD). Some are members of the main international professional organisation in the field: the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) (see 7.3).

Figure 3: Professional associations

	Founded	*No. of members*	*Main membership*
Association of Careers Advisers in Colleges of Higher Education (ACACHE)	1977	48 individuals (42 full; 6 associate)	Careers advisers in colleges of higher education
Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS)	1967 (as Standing Conference of University Appointment Services)	c-1,000 individuals (+ over 100 correspondent members)	Careers advisers in universities
Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education (AMOSSHE)	1976 (as Association of Polytechnic Student Services)	105 institutions	Managers of student services in higher education
Careers Services National Association (CSNA)	1994	66 organisations	Chief executives (and chairs of boards) of careers services
Institute of Careers Guidance (ICG)	1922 (as Association of Juvenile Employment and Welfare Officers)	c-3,000 individuals	Traditionally mainly careers advisers in careers services; now covers other sectors including private sector
National Association for Educational Guidance for Adults (NAEGA)	1982 (as National Association of Educational Guidance Services)	221 institutional members; 147 individual members	Adult guidance workers, including those working in further education and careers services
National Association for Pastoral Care in Education (NAPCE)	1982	over 1,600 individuals	Tutors and pastoral-care heads in schools
National Association of Careers and Guidance Teachers (NACGT)	1969 (as National Association of Careers Teachers)	c-2,000 individuals	Careers co-ordinators in schools
National Association of Managers of Student Services (NAMSS)	1992	350 institutional members; 4 individual members	Managers of student services in further education

5 Current structural changes

5.1 Two main structural changes are currently taking place which are likely to have major effects on the guidance sector:

a The new ConneXions service.

b The new Learning and Skills Council.

5.2 The *ConneXions* service is to provide an integrated and support service to young people between the ages of 13 and 19. It is designed to bring together a variety of agencies, including careers services, youth services and others, and to provide every young person with access to a "personal adviser". This role includes guidance for learning and work, but also support with a wide range of personal and social issues (drug dependency, etc.). Pathfinders and pilots are to run from April 2000, with a phased introduction of the full service from April 2001.

5.3 It seems likely that careers services (2.4a) will be subsumed within the new arrangements, and that the Careers Service will disappear as a visible national entity. The statutory duty of the Secretary of State to provide careers services for school and college students, enshrined in the Employment and Training Act 1973 as amended by the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993, will however remain.

5.4 Personal advisers are viewed as a "new profession": their relationship with existing professions (including career guidance) is as yet unclear. They will refer young people with particular needs to specialists: it is uncertain whether these will include specialist careers advisers.

5.5 Within schools, personal advisers are to be "learning mentors". They will be appointed and managed by head teachers but will operate as part of the ConneXions service. This suggests dual accountability, which could be a source of tensions and confusion. It also risks the loss of impartial guidance from outside the school (currently provided by the Careers Service) at age 16: this is problematic in 11-18 schools which have a vested interest in confining guidance to options within the school. It is as yet unclear how the role of learning mentors will relate to pastoral-care structures and careers programmes within schools (cf. 2.2a).

5.6 The *Learning and Skills Council* is to be responsible for the planning, funding, delivery and quality assurance of post-16 education and training. It will comprise a national Council with two statutory committees (one for young people and one for adult learning) and 47 local Councils. It will effectively replace the current roles of the Further Education Funding Council and the Training and Enterprise Councils. In relation to guidance, it will:

a Be expected to work closely with the ConneXions service (see 5.2-5.5 above).

b Be responsible for taking a lead role – in consultation with local Learning Partnerships – in funding and planning local information, advice and guidance services for adults (see 5.7).

c Be responsible for any arrangements related to the funding of *guidance* within post-16 education and training provision (replacing the FEFC's current arrangements, but also extending any new arrangements to cover training as well as education provision).

5.7 Among the responsibilities of the Learning and Skills Council will be the implementation of the new "national framework" of local information, advice and guidance (IAG) services for adults announced by the government in early 1999. To establish the framework, £54m is being provided over three years to establish local IAGA partnerships. During 1999/2000 funding has been provided for six "pathfinder" areas, plus "seed money" for establishing partnerships in other areas. The initiative includes official endorsement of the Guidance Council quality standards in relation to adult guidance, and requires that all providers who are members of local partnerships must possess the Guidance Accreditation Board's Quality Mark as a condition of grant; they will also need to have systems in place to demonstrate that staff are competent to deliver the services they are offering, using the National Occupational Standards (see 4.5) as a benchmark for assessing competence.

5.8 An important part of the national framework is the Learndirect helpline and website. This is designed to provide free access to information on all formal learning opportunities.

5.9 Guidance is also a potentially significant aspect of another feature of the government's lifelong learning strategy: Individual Learning Accounts. These are designed to provide a basis for sharing responsibility for investing in learning between individuals, employers and government, while recognising that individuals are best placed to choose what and why they want to learn. Guidance is a means of reconciling these two principles: reassuring government and employers that while decisions will be made by individuals, they will be well-informed and well-thought-through. It is also potentially an important means of motivating individuals to invest in their own learning. In addition, ILAs could in the longer term be a means of funding guidance, on a co-investment basis. The level of commitment to ILAs within the present Parliament is, however, fairly limited.

6 The UK context

6.1 Most of the structure of the sector outlined in the earlier sections of this report has hitherto applied to the United Kingdom as a whole, though there have been some differences. For example:

a In Scotland, there has been a system – more structured than elsewhere in the UK – of promoted posts in guidance in schools.

b In Scotland, the Careers Service was contracted out, not through a competitive-tendering approach as in England and Wales (cf. 2.4a), but by inviting partnership bids from LEAs and Local Enterprise Companies (the equivalent of TECs).

c In Northern Ireland, the Careers Service and the Employment Service have for some time been effectively merged, currently under the Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment; accordingly, no contracting-out occurred.

6.2 Most of the representative organisations mentioned in Section 3 have, in principle at least, a UK-wide remit. Some have separate branches for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales; in Scotland, guidance teachers have their own association (the Scottish Guidance Association).

6.3 With devolution, it seems likely that diversity between the different parts of the UK will grow in the guidance sector as elsewhere. Already a number of important differences are beginning to emerge:

a In Wales, policy is moving towards an all-age approach, with an all-age guidance service – Careers Wales – which will draw together the Careers Service, an Adult Guidance Initiative and the Learndirect helpline under one lead provider in each area (the careers service company). This contrasts with England, where policy seems to be moving in the opposite direction, with the risk of an ever sharper distinction between services for young people and for adults.

b In Scotland, a review of the Careers Service is currently under way, which may or may not lead in the direction of an all-age approach. Following the Beattie Committee's report on social inclusion, it seems likely that the Careers Service will be seen as a significant *contributor* to new youth support arrangements addressed to young people at risk. This contrasts with England, where the Careers Service seems likely to be *subsumed* within, and effectively *replaced* by, such arrangements.

c In Northern Ireland, the approach being adopted to adult guidance is more strongly community-based than it is elsewhere.

7 The wider international context

7.1 Guidance systems in other countries vary:

a In some cases (e.g. Denmark, Ireland, USA), they are based mainly within *educational institutions*.

b In some cases (e.g. Belgium, France, Italy), they are based mainly in separate *agencies* which service educational institutions but also have the capacity (or, at least, the potential capacity) to provide support for those outside the educational system.

c In some cases (e.g. Germany) they are linked closely to the training system and based mainly within official *labour-market organisations*.

7.2 Most guidance services in other countries are financed and managed by *public authorities*. The role of the *voluntary sector* is particularly strong in Italy. Quasi-market approaches to guidance services (e.g. contracting-out, vouchers) have been most pronounced in the Netherlands and the UK, and to some extent in France. In most countries, there is some *private-sector* activity, but even in the USA the only area where a significant market has developed for career guidance services is outplacement counselling – where the employer pays, is prepared to pay at commercial rates, has an interest in a positive outcome, but has no interest in what that outcome should be.

7.3 The main international association in the guidance field is the *International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG)*. Its main members are national associations, which represent 25,000 individuals from all continents; there are also 300 individual members and 25 institutional members. IAEVG is recognised by UNESCO as an international non-governmental organisation (NGO). Its current Secretary-General is based in the UK.

8 SWOT analysis

8.1 The current *strengths* of the guidance sector in the UK include the following:

a Lifelong access to guidance is widely recognised in principle as being crucial to lifelong learning and labour-market flexibility.

b The sector has a tradition of committed professionalism and underpinning principles.

c The field includes a wide and flexible range of provision, from community-based to professional services, and covering the public, private and voluntary sectors.

d The Guidance Council and CAMPAG have brought greater harmonisation to the field.

e An intellectual base is available in guidance theory and career development theory; this is currently being strengthened by moves to develop a "research culture".

f Such evidence as exists on the economic and social benefits of guidance is broadly positive.

8.2 The *weaknesses* of the sector include the following:

a The recognition of the importance of guidance in relation to lifelong learning and labour-market flexibility has not yet been translated into practice.

b There are too many small and separate professional associations, with limited resources.

c The professional fragmentation of the field leaves it weak and vulnerable to political pressures.

d Key parts of the field (notably the Careers Service) are strongly policy-driven and therefore dependent on government priorities.

e Many individuals have limited understanding of what guidance is and how it can help them.

f Individuals seem unwilling to pay for guidance, or willing to do so at rates which only cover marginal costs and therefore require subsidy: this produces market failure.

g The resources allocated to guidance services within education and employment are dependent on decision-makers' view of its importance in relation to their *organisational* goals; the tensions between this and services designed to serve the interests of *individuals* are not always understood, and may be denied.

h There is a lack of definitive evidence on the economic and social benefits of guidance.

i Guidance can sometimes receive a "bad press", with individuals quoted in the media as claiming they were given "bad" advice: this may reflect the complexity of the processes involved, rather than necessarily reflecting bad practice.

8.3 The *opportunities* for the sector include the following:

a "New career" concepts, with individuals being responsible for managing more flexible careers, in principle significantly enhance the case for lifelong access to guidance.

b Information and communication technologies could substantially improve access to, and the quality of, guidance provision.

c Individual Learning Accounts could increase recognition of the need for guidance, and also provide a means of covering costs on a co-investment basis between individuals and/or employers and/or government.

d The Learning and Skills Council could provide a stronger base than hitherto for funding of adult guidance.

e The CAMPAG competency standards could produce a more coherent professional structure and could facilitate progression routes across sectors within the guidance field.

f The Guidance Council Quality Standards and the Guidance Accreditation Board's accreditation processes could be a major instrument for cross-sectoral harmonisation.

8.4 The *threats* facing the sector include the following:

a If guidance is associated with "old career" concepts (progression up hierarchies within an occupation or profession), it could be viewed as outdated and redundant.

b Information and communication technologies could undermine quality-control arrangements, and tempt policy-makers to erode human services.

c More powerful political agendas could marginalise guidance: e.g. the current government's social inclusion agenda could erode the notion of a universal entitlement to guidance.

d If the Learning and Skills Councils become strongly provider-driven, guidance could be marginalised.

9 Key issues

9.1 Two key issues in the guidance sector relate to *harmonisation* and to *funding*.

9.2 On *harmonisation*, the diffuse nature of the field means that there is a lack of coherence, progression and continuity in provision. There is a risk that the split between the current proposals for young people and for adults, with separate inspection arrangements and separate committee structures for each group within the Learning and Skills Council, will make it difficult to achieve co-ordinated arrangements for lifelong access to guidance. Such co-ordination is important for several reasons:

a There is evidence that adults' attitudes to guidance are strongly (and too often negatively) influenced by the guidance they have received at school. Young people's experience of high-quality guidance needs to be congruent with the guidance that will be available to them as adults.

b Guidance for young people needs to adopt a lifelong prospective: laying the foundations for lifelong career development, and indicating how guidance can be accessed on a continuing basis. This is more likely within a co-ordinated lifelong strategy.

c Stronger links with guidance for adults can help to ensure that guidance provided for young people is in closer touch with the realities of the labour market and the changes in career patterns.

d As with "family learning" approaches, there can be helpful interactions between guidance provision for young people and for parents. These opportunities are more likely to be harnessed within a co-ordinated strategy.

e Services for young people tend to be more strongly developed than for adults. Drawing on the resources of these services in developing stronger services for adults is likely to lead to significant economies of scale and enhanced cost-effectiveness.

9.3 On *funding*, provision for young people has been to some extent assured by the core which the statutory nature of the Careers Service provides: this is now in question (see 5.3). For adults, there has been no such core element. Provision has tended to be at the mercy of a range of short-term funding agendas and priorities (some local, some national, some European). Some of these funding sources (e.g. TEC and European Social Fund support) are disappearing. The new national funding (see 5.7) is mainly for information and advice, not for in-depth guidance. The market for in-depth guidance is still ill-developed; Individual Learning Accounts could provide a long-term solution, but not yet. There is a risk that while the case for lifelong access to guidance grows stronger, difficulties will continue to be experienced in translating it into practice.

II Quality Assurance in the Guidance Sector

10 Introduction

10.1 The development of approaches to quality assurance by organisations offering guidance on learning and work has been driven by a number of influences – both "top down" and "bottom up":

a At national level, governments have been keen to increase the accountability of providers to those funding and receiving their services.

b There has been a desire amongst those responsible for funding delivery at all levels (DfEE, TECs, etc.) to address weaknesses and ensure consistency in provision.

c The lifelong learning agenda has underlined the need to encourage adults to access guidance. This requires greater public confidence in the quality of guidance provision.

10.2 Quality assurance and the setting of standards have been promoted through a number of government initiatives during the last decade. For example, government offices have encouraged careers services to develop standards for use in schools and colleges; they have also required careers services to work to a common quality-assurance framework, and have encouraged them to achieve national awards such as Investors in People (IiP).

10.3 The 1990s witnessed a growing climate of competition between educational institutions. For instance, there has been increasing concern on the part of colleges about the tendency of schools with sixth forms to bias guidance at 16 in order to encourage students to stay on (with the financial advantages this brought to the school) rather than move elsewhere. This gave impetus to the development of locally-agreed codes of practice to ensure the impartiality of careers education and guidance at 16. In 1995 the Society of Education Officers prepared a set of guidelines to support the development of such local codes.

10.4 Greater competition has been a factor in encouraging a range of organisations to work towards and achieve national awards such as IiP and Charter Mark, and to adopt quality-assurance systems such as ISO 9000. Agencies have been keen to gain recognition for the quality of work they deliver, and have acknowledged that working to such national schemes can deliver benefits in terms of greater cost-effectiveness, efficiency and public recognition.

10.5 The Business Excellence Model, developed by the European Foundation for Quality Management, was launched in 1992. This provides a framework for self-assessment, which can encompass other quality-assurance systems and awards (e.g. IiP), and supports an organisation's commitment to excellence and continuous quality improvement. An increasing number of guidance providers are committing themselves to work with this model.

10.6 At local level, arrangements for securing quality in careers education and guidance have usually been developed through partnership working, in the form of:

a Codes of practice developed locally.

b Local quality standards for careers education and guidance (for schools and colleges) and for information, advice and guidance (for adult guidance).

In many cases the development of a shared understanding of what is acceptable practice by staff throughout an organisation – and between organisations in a local area – has been key to raising the quality of delivery.

10.7 Features of quality frameworks which have been increasing in importance in recent years include:

a Self-assessment (e.g. careers services; colleges of further education; training providers).

b Client satisfaction (e.g. FEFC; Careers Service; Guidance Council standards).

c Benchmarking (e.g. FEFC national benchmarking data; Careers Service benchmarking activities).

11 The role of guidance professional bodies

11.1 The guidance professional bodies (see 4.6) have contributed significantly to raising the quality of provision, particularly within their own membership, but also more broadly through local networking and collaborative initiatives amongst practitioners. Working groups have produced a number of policy statements, identifying and promoting aspects of good practice. Many also lobby government and other national bodies on issues which often have a direct bearing on the quality of provision delivered to clients.

11.2 The majority of professional bodies have developed codes of practice or similar, to which members are expected to adhere (ICG, NACGT, NAEGA, NAMSS); AGCAS has produced a code to encourage good practice in graduate recruitment, in collaboration with the Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR) and the National Union of Students (NUS). Whilst the context in which members work is reflected in each code of practice, all broadly reflect common principles (see 12.1).

11.3 The Institute of Careers Guidance has published not only a code of professional practice, which many careers services display on their premises, but also a code of ethical practice which covers the standards of competence, integrity and rigour expected of members. In 1999, the Institute established a Register of Guidance Practitioners which members are invited to join, and which commits them to continuous professional development. This does not provide a "licence to practise", but aims to give some protection to consumers of guidance.

12 Principles underpinning "good quality" guidance

12.1 In 1996, the Guidance Council published a *Code of Principles* which included a set of six interdependent principles:

a Impartiality.
b Confidentiality.
c Individual ownership.
d Equality of opportunity.
e Transparency.
f Accessibility.

12.2 These principles reflect a general consensus within the sector regarding what is considered to be good practice. They underpin the Guidance Council's Quality Standards, which are client-oriented and aim to reflect achievable practice. Whilst there is some variation according to the context in which practitioners work, the principles:

a are to be found in codes of practice drafted by guidance professional associations (e.g. ICG, NACGT, NAEGA, NAMSS);
b have shaped the sets of standards to which practitioners and managers work;
c are often embodied in contractual arrangements and inspection frameworks (e.g. impartiality is a requirement for careers services, and is included in the *Student Charter for Further Education*).

13 The development of the Guidance Council Quality Standards

13.1 The Guidance Council Quality Standards were initially drafted in 1996/97 by six working groups comprising practitioners and managers representing the full range of settings in which guidance for learning and work is delivered (including both public and private sectors). The groups worked to a quality framework for guidance across all sectors set out in *First Steps* (Hawthorn, 1995). The principles underpinning the development process were that the standards should:

a be client-focused;
b reflect achievable practice;
c be presented in plain English, and be easily used by clients, providers and external evaluators;
d be based on the framework in *First Steps* and on the Council's *Code of Principles*.

13.2 The standards were developed on the basis of service type (e.g. "adult impartial" indicates an independent service delivered for adults in the community) rather than sector (further education, higher education, etc.) on the grounds that there are similarities in delivery across sectors. The drafting was informed by market research undertaken with clients to identify what was important to them in service delivery. Initial piloting and trialling of the standards has led to some revision and clarification, particularly in relation to the standards applicable to working with adults. Here the development process has been spurred by the government's decision, noted in 5.7, that providers in receipt of public funding for information, advice and guidance for adults should be accredited to these standards by March 2001 (or, particularly in the case of the voluntary and community sector, by March 2002).

13.3 The quality standards specify what evidence providers will need in order to demonstrate that they comply with the standards. There are four measures, which taken together reflect the focus on the client perspective in the quality-assurance model:

a audit (undertaken through self-assessment or during inspection);

b client feedback (including indicative thresholds);

c staff feedback;

d briefed customer (or mystery shopper).

13.4 The accreditation process is based on a self-assessment model with random inspection on a four-yearly basis. This requires providers to be able, for example, to:

a assess themselves against the standards and identify areas of non-compliance;

b consider the appropriate action which needs to be taken and prepare relevant development plans;

c identify sources of evidence and build portfolios;

d undertake and interpret client surveys.

13.5 As is demonstrated in the ensuing summary of approaches to quality assurance within the range of settings in which guidance is delivered, the experience and understanding of quality assurance varies between settings and even in some cases between similar providers. Moreover, the staff and managers delivering guidance may not be those who have been involved in undertaking activities related to quality assurance such as self-assessment, auditing and client surveys. In the long term, emphasis on self-assessment, rather than just on inspection, should contribute to quality improvement. In the short term, some providers may need support in developing their quality-assurance processes.

13.6 The existing quality-assurance arrangements outlined in the following sections tend to reflect the main concerns of those who have developed or imposed them. These concerns may include, for example, the wish:

a to measure performance;

b to increase cost-effectiveness;

c to identify levels of customer satisfaction;

d to ensure accountability for public funding.

Many are concerned primarily with *public accountability*. This means that in principle they are complementary to the Guidance Council standards, which are concerned primarily with quality from the *client's* viewpoint.

13.7 Where guidance provision is embedded within educational settings, external inspection arrangements are designed to review current practice and offer advice for improvement. On the other hand, national quality awards may focus on particular aspects of organisational activity (e.g. Charter Mark on customer care; IiP on investment in training), which – whilst developing and reinforcing good practice – do not relate directly to the guidance process.

13.8 A diverse range of approaches can be identified in relation to the development of quality standards for guidance delivery. Some, for example, include assessment activities; others do not. Some address the processes and systems which underpin the delivery of guidance; whereas the Guidance Council Quality Standards are concerned with the delivery of guidance services as experienced by the user.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

13.9 A key issue for the future is the status of the Guidance Council's standards and the Guidance Accreditation Board's accreditation processes in relation to the various sectors. The standards were developed to cover all areas of guidance provision; moreover, because they were developed for practitioners by practitioners, rather than being imposed from above, they have considerable professional credibility. However, their DfEE endorsement is currently confined to adult guidance in receipt of public funding. If the standards are to be used extensively elsewhere, they will almost certainly need to be reconciled in some appropriate way with the existing quality arrangements that will now be outlined.

14 Quality standards in schools

14.1 Careers education and guidance (CEG) and work-related learning in schools are examined by OFSTED inspectors, who work to OFSTED's *Framework for the Inspection of Schools*. Under the new framework, which came into effect in January 2000, schools will be inspected every six years, unless they have previously been identified as having "serious weaknesses", in which case they will be visited more frequently. Some schools ("successful and improving") will only have a "light touch" inspection, in which case not all of the framework will be applied: in such cases CEG and work-related learning may not necessarily be covered.

14.2 CEG and work-related learning are addressed in full OFSTED inspections of individual schools. Occasionally OFSTED conducts theme inspections (e.g. its *National Survey of Careers Education and Guidance* published in 1998); often, however, its theme reports are based simply on analysing inspection evidence from individual school reports (e.g. its 1998 report on *Work-Related Aspects of the Curriculum in Secondary Schools*) rather than undertaking specific theme visits.

14.3 From the mid-1990s, careers services have worked with other local partners to develop quality standards for careers education and guidance in schools and colleges, to assist self-evaluation. In some cases these have provided the basis for quality awards. These developments have been encouraged by DfEE, which has been keen to enhance the quality and consistency of what is provided. Some of the awards have been designed essentially for local usage; others have been "exported". The three awards which have been adopted most extensively are:

a Career Mark – covering the East Midlands.

b Investors in Careers (IiC) – originating in Devon and Cornwall.

c Recognition of Quality Award (ROQA) – developed in Merseyside.

14.4 An early award was the "Leeds Standard", which together with IiC was used as a template by other services. Initial versions were normally targeted at key stages 3 and 4, and then adapted for work with the 16-19 age-group in further education. A study into the use of the local awards, commissioned by DfEE (Donoghue, 1996), found that:

a The content of the various awards was broadly similar and generally reflected the accepted five elements of careers education and guidance (careers education, careers guidance, careers information, experience of work, and recording of achievement and action planning), with reference to the principles, policies, processes and systems underpinning the provision.

b Whilst the standards had been influenced by a range of other quality-assurance systems, especially IiP, there was variation in the language and format, and also in the level of quality deemed acceptable (from a minimal to a more "challenging" level).

14.5 According to Donoghue (1996), the assessment process for different awards was variable. In some cases it was based around self-assessment, using checklists. The most developed typically included:

a An initial statement of commitment from institutions to work towards the standards.

b Self-assessment against the standards.

c An advisory visit by an assessor and the agreement of an action plan.

d External assessment (generally including inspection of the portfolio and discussion with staff) and moderation of the findings, leading to an award or to a second action plan.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

14.6 In the early stages of implementing the award, the careers service normally provided informal support and assistance to institutions in monitoring their progress; systems then became more formalised as the standards became better established. Assessors were nearly always drawn from local organisations (TECs, careers services, LEAs, etc.), held the relevant Training and Development Lead Body standards, and were often registered as OFSTED or FEFC inspectors.

14.7 Factors affecting take-up of the standards included:

a The value placed on the award by senior managers, and any perceived marketing advantage offered (the awards were developed in a climate of increased levels of competition).

b The extent to which the standards supported institutions in meeting other quality requirements and were linked to other careers-related initiatives (e.g. OFSTED inspections, or the DfEE careers library initiative).

The adoption of national standards such as IiP also encouraged take-up of local award schemes.

14.8 Whilst there is an anecdotal evidence on the value of the awards to institutions, no detailed study of this appears to have been undertaken; however, a study on the impact of Career Mark in this respect has been commissioned. Case-study evidence on impact (DfEE, 1996) indicates:

a An increased profile for careers education and guidance amongst students, staff, senior management, parents and employers.

b Increased support for careers education and guidance from governors.

c Greater coherence and cost-effectiveness in provision.

d Increased consistency in delivery.

e Improved student behaviour and attendance.

Students were also reported as being more "career aware" and better able to link their careers education and guidance to other work. Practitioners indicated that there were significant benefits in terms of their own professional development and increased understanding of their training needs.

14.9 In addition to the investment in terms of staff time and resources in the initial development of the awards, some careers services have marketed and sold their awards to careers companies elsewhere for use with local schools and colleges, and accordingly have a financial stake in the on-going maintenance and use of their award.

14.10 Unpublished research was undertaken by Anne Taylor in 1999 for the Guidance Council. It compared the local quality awards for CEG in schools with the Guidance Council's "youth impartial" standards (YIS), and the Business Excellence Model - now increasingly known as the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) excellence model. The analysis concluded that:

a There is similarity in content, but the Guidance Council standards include "marketing and promotion" and a requirement to produce a statement of service, whereas the local standards include aspects of policy and management.

b In relation to the EFQM excellence model, the local standards tend to focus on "enablers", whereas the Guidance Council standards address "results".

14.11 OFSTED (1998) commented that the local quality awards had "provided a useful incentive for schools to gain accreditation and recognition for the quality of their CEG programmes", and that schools were generally keen to take part in the schemes. It further noted:

> "Given the recent growth of local quality awards and the inspection criteria determined by OFSTED, there is a need to consider the possibility of bringing together the various schemes under a common framework" (p.20).

The content and nature of the awards are currently being reviewed by careers service companies in the light of the anticipated introduction of the new ConneXions service (see 5.2-5.5).

14.12 The last decade has witnessed a growth in particular guidance-related activities in schools, notably:

a Education-business links, in support of work-related learning, through initiatives undertaken by schools, and TECs working with other partners and employers.

b Mentoring (including the recent introduction of "learning mentors", now to be extended as part of the Connexions strategy).

Self-review frameworks have recently been developed for both mentoring (Miller, 1999) and work-related learning (Clements, Fiehn & Miller, 1999) based on the EFQM excellence model: these are currently being piloted.

14.13 Section C of the Guidance Council quality standards are designed for use in schools and are currently being trialled in Tyneside and Solihull. There is interest in accreditation for these standards being provided by the Guidance Accreditation Board.

15 Quality standards in further education

15.1 Colleges of further education are inspected against a framework for self-assessment and inspection (FEFC, 1997b). This includes an element relating to "support for students", which requires colleges to produce evidence that "quality statements" have been met. In relation to careers education and guidance, this covers:

a Impartial guidance before and on entry.

b Induction programmes enabling students to settle quickly into their course.

c Effective learning support for students.

d Appropriate guidance for students on career opportunities available to them.

e Access to relevant support on personal issues.

Colleges are required to produce a students' charter which includes the right of students to access "impartial advice". The implementation of such charters is monitored in college inspections.

15.2 The importance of self-assessment as a tool in quality improvement was highlighted to colleges by the FEFC in the mid-1990s, and a requirement to produce a self-assessment report prior to inspection was subsequently introduced in 1997. These reports are supposed to take full account of students' and other customers' views and to be based on evidence which is explicitly referenced and includes both local and national performance indicators. Since 1997, self-assessment has gradually been embedded in colleges' planning and review cycles.

15.3 Other quality-assurance frameworks and standards used in further education come from a number of sources. Some have been based on good practice identified in national publications (e.g. FEU, 1993); others have been adapted from specific initiatives (e.g. Gateways to Learning) or from the local standards developed by careers services for use in schools. The latter have had a more variable reception in further education. Take-up has tended to be higher amongst sixth-form colleges, which have more often adopted – and can more easily resource – a student entitlement to a careers education programme. The standards fit less easily into larger and more complex further education colleges offering a range of full-time and part-time provision, where on average 80% of students are adults.

15.4 A survey of colleges undertaken by the Further Education Development Agency (FEDA) (Sadler & Reisenberger, 1996) indicated that whilst internal quality-assurance policies included guidance activities, only about half had specific quality standards in this area. An inspectorate report on careers education and guidance (FEFC, 1997a) commented:

> "a small number of colleges have set standards and developed quality assurance procedures for their careers work. However, the majority of colleges give inadequate attention to careers education and guidance in their strategic plans and monitoring procedures" (p.13).

15.5 Many guidance staff in colleges belong to one or more professional associations (usually ICG, NAEGA or NAMSS) and subscribe to their codes of practice. They are also likely to be working to performance indicators as part of the quality system within the institution.

15.6 Findings from the FEDA survey (Sadler & Reisenberger, 1997) found that 90% of institutions were collecting student satisfaction data, often using SPOC (Student Perception of Course) and other quality questionnaires, administered through the college's quality-assurance unit. There has been some concern that the content of SPOC questionnaires is too broad to provide sufficiently useful data on careers education and guidance delivery to support continuous quality improvement. On the other hand, questionnaire overload has in the past led some senior management teams to discourage the collection of detailed feedback evidence.

15.7 Self-assessment reports prepared by careers services and colleges for a joint DfEE/FEFC inspection in 1999 indicated that students were not being given adequate opportunity to give their views on the services they were receiving, and that there tended to be too much reliance on anecdotal perceptions rather than on the systematic collection of data. The inspection report (DfEE, 1999b) recommended:

> "that careers services and colleges review the systems they have in place for collecting comprehensive information, qualitative and quantitative, on customers' views on the effectiveness of the CEG provided and the use they make of it" (p.31).

15.8 The FEFC Inspectorate report on the joint inspections with DfEE (FEFC, 2000) reinforces the importance of self-assessment, and includes a number of questions which institutions should be addressing to assess the quality of their provision. These include whether an institution has developed standards for careers education and guidance, and whether there is an audit to verify these. The inspections had revealed a mixture of practice with, in some cases, inadequate management and quality assurance to address the weaknesses.

15.9 Elements of guidance on learning and work can be delivered by a wide range of staff in colleges. Consistency in the delivery of careers education programmes and of tutorial support to a given standard is a challenge for large institutions with substantial part-time and contract staffing. The tutor role has recently been focusing more on individual progress review than on pastoral care. The introduction of Curriculum 2000, which introduces new modular arrangements, is likely to place increased emphasis on the tutorial function in order to ensure academic coherence in learning choices.

15.10 Arrangements for independent external inspection will change as the Learning and Skills Councils (see 5.6) come into operation in 2001. OFSTED will extend its current responsibilities to cover 16-19-year-olds in schools and colleges, and a new Adult Learning Inspectorate will be established to cover post-19 provision in colleges and work-based learning.

16 Quality standards in higher education

16.1 The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) was established in 1997. It embraces the functions of the former Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) and the quality-assessment functions of the Higher Education Funding Councils for England, Wales and Scotland. Its main purpose is to review the performance of universities and colleges of higher education, through audits of overall academic management and through subject reviews. QAA is currently piloting a new quality-assurance system for higher education, which incorporates subject benchmarks, qualifications frameworks and codes of practice. This is likely to be introduced in Scotland and Wales in 2000/01 and in England and Northern Ireland in 2002. It will require institutions to produce self-evaluation reports for both subject and institutional reviews. A code of practice is being developed for the institutional reviews, one section of which covers careers education, information and guidance (CEIG).

16.2 As part of the development process for the new arrangements, QAA has set up working groups to draft sections of the code of practice covering specific aspects of higher education provision. The draft CEIG section requires institutions to provided a dedicated careers service. The precepts include an expectation that institutions will wish to consider adopting recognised quality standards; the guidelines explicitly endorse the AGCAS (see 16.5-16.7) and Guidance Council quality standards. The section will be issued for consultation review over the next few months. It will encompass a wide range of guidance-related activities undertaken in institutions,

including those undertaken by academic staff. Once finalised, institutions will be given a year to prepare for possible assessment against the relevant section of the code of practice. Other sections of the code under development (e.g. on disability) are likely to include elements related to career and educational guidance provision in institutions: a review will be needed later in the development process to cross-reference the sections.

16.3 QAA will continue to require institutions to provide information from careers advisory services and student services, if requested, during subject reviews. Provision covered by the code of practice will be selected for inclusion in institutional reviews. It is likely therefore that careers education and guidance in institutions will be inspected approximately every five years.

16.4 The inclusion of careers education, information and guidance in the code of practice is likely to:

a Increase the profile of guidance provision within institutions.

b Encourage institutions to review the role and performance of academic staff in the delivery of careers education and guidance.

16.5 The "quality agenda" for careers guidance in higher education has also been driven forward recently by the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS). The report it commissioned on *Strategic Directions for Careers Services in Higher Education* (Watts, 1997) led to the establishment of an advisory group to develop quality standards that would take account of other quality-assurance arrangements which institutions were likely to be asked to meet.

16.6 Within this process, it was decided that the AGCAS standards should be aligned as closely as possible with those of the Guidance Council, although with altered wording to reflect the specific nature of the work and clients. Three pilots have been undertaken, the third of which piloted 9 standards in 20 services. The standards will be published shortly and will include versions of all the Guidance Council standards, apart from Premises, Equipment, Networking, and Client Records: the intention is to incorporate most of these as well in the longer term. AGCAS has also devised additional standards related to its remit, including Institutional Alignment and Vacancy Handling.

16.7 The AGCAS standards use audit, client feedback and peer review, but do not as yet include "mystery shopper" techniques: significant objections were raised to such techniques during the trials. Difficulty with the wording of the Guidance Council client questionnaires was also reported: fresh work has accordingly been undertaken to devise questionnaires appropriate for the sector. Higher education institutions seeking funding from IAGA partnerships will be required to work to the Guidance Council standards (see 13.2), and it is expected that AGCAS will accept these so long as institutions also meet the two additional standards. The AGCAS standards will apply to all AGCAS member services, which include some colleges of higher education.

17 Quality standards in training provision

17.1 The Training Standards Council, established in 1997 and funded by DfEE, has been working on the basis of a rolling four-year programme to inspect approximately 2,000 organisations offering government-funded work-based training, including provision funded through European Social Fund (ESF), Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and TEC monies, as well as provision within the New Deal programme and that offered through franchise agreements with further education colleges. Organisations are graded on a five-point scale. The Council's aim is to encourage organisations to take responsibility for their own performance assessment and continuous quality improvement.

17.2 The inspection framework (TSC, 1998) requires training providers to support trainees in the organisation as a whole. It includes the following quality statements:

a "potential trainees are given accurate and objective advice";

b "personal counselling and advice are available to trainees to help them to complete their programme of study".

Organisations are required to undertake regular self-assessment against the framework in order to identify weaknesses, and to produce action plans in order to enhance overall performance.

TECs have a responsibility to support local providers in the self-assessment process and monitor their action plans, as well as ensuring contract compliance through the TEC Quality Assurance and Supplier Management system (TQASM). The findings from the first year of inspections (1999) indicated that over 150 of the 300 organisations seen had at least one area of weakness. More than half the providers gained top grades for pastoral support.

18 Quality standards in employment-based guidance provision

18.1 The diversity of the employment sector means that it is difficult to generalise about quality-assurance procedures. Larger companies with discrete personnel functions, or with their own career development centres or employment development schemes, are more likely to employ staff who work to a code of practice (such as that drafted by IPD), or may have developed their own standards. National quality-assurance schemes and awards (e.g. ISO 9000) will include the human resource function within the organisational context. IiP focuses on the development of staff as a key to business success: companies must demonstrate that they regularly evaluate their employees' training needs. The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) excellence model also recognises the importance of trained and competent staff.

18.2 Unpublished research carried out in 1996 by Cambridge Training and Development (CTAD) in association with NICEC suggested that many of the employers consulted did not want quality standards along the lines of those developed by the Guidance Council for other sectors, but instead would be more interested in some form of check-list. Accordingly, a working group drafted a set of *Good Practice Guidelines for Individual Development in Organisations*. These recognise that:

a "Guidance" delivered within an employment context is generally part of other activities (e.g staff appraisal) rather than a discrete activity.

b The scope of the interaction is likely to be limited (i.e. often focusing on opportunities within the company).

c In many cases the needs of the company, as well as the employee, will guide the discussion.

The guidelines cover three areas appropriate for delivery in this context: improving opportunities for individual development; delivery; and infrastructure.

18.3 It is possible, however, that some companies might wish to develop their own in-house provision to Guidance Council standards. They might also want to utilise such standards when commissioning work from other organisations such as outplacement specialists.

19 Quality standards in the Careers Service

19.1 When the delivery of careers services, which had previously been the responsibility of local education authorities, was contracted out over the period from 1993 to 1996 (see 2.4a), the Careers Service Inspectorate was disbanded. Those winning tenders were required to meet the arrangements for the delivery of careers services outlined in the Department for Education and Employment's *Requirements and Guidance for Providers*.

19.2 A quality framework for the new contracted services was developed from the TQASM model used by TECs to assess the performance of training providers (see 17.2). The Careers Service Quality Assurance Provider Management (CSQAPM) framework has been based on a set of principles to encourage performance review and continuous quality improvement. These have covered:

a *Contract capability*, ensuring that the resources and skills available meet DfEE requirements, including specifying competence requirements in terms of NVQ Levels 3, 4 or 5.

b *The delivery process*, ensuring that services are delivered in line with the standards set.

c *Review arrangements*, including both individual achievement and overall performance.

d *Evaluation*, requiring providers to undertake self-assessment and feed the results into the review process. This includes operating an effective system for collecting customer feedback from both individual clients and organisations receiving services (employers, educational establishments, etc.).

e *Client satisfaction*, requiring providers to take steps to ensure that users and key local interests are satisfied with, and can influence the direction of, the service provided, and that there is a complaints procedure. Key interests include LEAs, educational establishments, TECs, training providers, and representatives of special interest groups.

f *Continuous improvement*, taking account of data from review of quality systems, performance in relation to business plans, and other evaluation data. Providers have also been expected to make effective arrangements for networking and collaborative activities, and to benchmark and assess themselves against other providers.

19.3 In the first year that a contract was awarded, the regional government office undertook a CSQAPM systems audit, followed by on-going compliance audits against the key outcomes and supporting processes required of providers in their core contract (career decisions; referral and placing; services to parents and guardians; services to educational establishments and employers; etc.). In-depth audits have been conducted in any case where there has been doubt about the quality of system compliance, or of delivery against improvement plans.

19.4 From the mid-1990s, thematic performance assessment surveys have been conducted annually across approximately 25% of careers service providers, covering aspects of the services they are required to deliver. Topics covered have included action planning, group work, work with employers, and information. The results have been published to disseminate good practice.

19.5 A large majority of careers service providers have also obtained the Investors in People (IiP) award; in addition, 16 currently hold the Charter Mark, and others are working towards it.

19.6 Similarly, a number of careers service providers have been working towards the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) excellence model. This has been encouraged by DfEE, which prior to the advent of the ConneXions service was considering the introduction of "preferred supplier status", using the model as a requirement in this process. Work was undertaken nationally to develop a customised version of the EFQM excellence model, accompanied by a guide for careers service providers. DfEE worked with a small number of providers, using the EFQM excellence model to try out new approaches to continuous quality improvement (CQI), including self-assessment, benchmarking and the development of continuous-improvement action plans.

19.7 Significant progress has recently been made in implementing EFQM across careers service providers. Unpublished research undertaken by CSNA in 1999 into the level of commitment by careers service providers to the EFQM excellence model found that all 52 of those responding (covering 88% of the total number of contract areas) had made commitments to the model. Of these, 50 had undertaken familiarisation training with staff; 42 had trained assessors; and 29 were due to have undertaken self-assessment by the end of 2000.

19.8 A number of regional quality groups have been established across the country, which have been addressing benchmarking. A range of benchmarking activity is being undertaken:

a between individual companies both within and across regions;

b between different contract areas managed by the same group provider;

c with the private sector.

19.9 As the new ConneXions Service is introduced and the "personal adviser" role is established (see 5.2-5.5), ConneXions service providers will need to take greater account of standards developed for youth work and related areas. These may include:

a The 15 standards areas specific to young people's information, advice, counselling and support (YIACS) services developed by Youth Access, the national membership association for this area of work.

b The standards for teams working with young offenders recently published by the Home Office.

Initial indications are that providers of ConneXions services will need to incorporate the key principles, outlined in recent government papers (e.g. DfEE, 2000), into the quality-assurance systems they adopt, but will not necessarily have to work to a single imposed framework or system. The principles are likely to include accountability, effectiveness, efficiency, staff

competence, and commitment to continuous improvement. The Guidance Council standards embody elements of these, but probably would not be deemed adequate to cover all – nor were envisaged to do so. OFSTED has begun work with DfEE to develop an inspection framework for the new service.

20 Quality standards in the Employment Service

20.1 The Employment Service (ES) has held the Investors in People award since the early 1990s and the service is applying for re-assessment for the third time in 2001. Some district managers have also decided to apply for the Charter Mark at local level. There are now 49 ES districts and 3 regional disability service teams which have been awarded the Charter Mark, and some of these have already been successful on re-assessment. In addition, some regions are beginning to work towards the EFQM excellence model.

20.2 The ES is encouraging its advisers to work towards the achievement of NVQ Level 3 in Guidance. By March 2000 the aim was to have:

a 90% of established (i.e. employed for 12 months or more) New Deal advisers achieving NVQ Level 3 in Guidance.

b 40% of non-New-Deal advisers working towards NVQ Level 3 in Guidance.

c 100% of Disability Employment Advisers to have achieved or to be working towards NVQ Level 3 in Guidance.

20.3 In relation to support staff, 4 districts within the ES have applied to the Institute of Customer Service to act as pilots, on behalf of the whole organisation, for the accreditation of front-line staff. This will give recognition to front-line staff for the work that they are undertaking within Jobcentres. The districts are Hereford & Worcester, Shropshire, the Fens, and the Welsh districts. The accreditation is in the form of an award giving recognition to good customer service. In at least one district involved in an IAG partnership (Hereford & Worcester) the manager is intending to start a training programme for all staff involved in giving information and advice, up to the equivalent of NVQ Levels 2 or 3 in Guidance.

20.4 The ES sets targets for staff in terms of outcomes from the interviews they undertake. Different quality-assurance frameworks (QAFs) have been designed to cover most of the various front-line operations conducted by Jobcentre staff. For example, the service published *A Short Guide to Quality for Advisers* in 1996, as a quality framework for interventions covering jobseekers and the job-seekers allowance (JSA). These include delivery standards applicable to reception and job-seeker interviews, and are documented in terms of "key objectives", the "action required", and the "delivery standards" which apply. There is also a quality-assurance framework for business managers to help them to monitor quality standards. Both are due to be updated later in 2000. A new QAF for job broking has been issued recently, and another will be produced shortly to reflect the principles of New Deal. The latter will be an advisory document, but with quality measures of performance. The service is considering whether to unite the QAFs so that there is only one set of quality standards for ES staff to refer to.

20.5 "Mystery shopping" for the ES is carried out by an external company every quarter. It includes:

a A visit, a letter and three telephone calls to each Jobcentre.

b A check of vacancies, posters and leaflets.

c A letter and three telephone calls to each disability service team.

The service has also carried out a national client satisfaction survey every two years, though the survey due for 1999 was not conducted because the research and development staff have been redesigning the survey method.

20.6 The Training Standards Council (see 17.1-17.2) is assessing the delivery of the New Deal programme, including the Gateway within which guidance on appropriate opportunities is provided to participants. In some cases the Gateway is delivered by ES staff ; in others it has been sub-contracted to external providers: all are being assessed within the Training Standards Council framework. In addition, all ES districts will be assessed by the Training Standards

Council, under a rolling programme, for the provision of training that has been identified as relevant during the New Deal Gateway. If any districts are highlighted as being "at risk", they will be re-assessed at more frequent intervals. The full guidance notes on this inspection are available in a booklet from the Training Standards Council entitled *Partners for Quality: Guidelines for Self-Assessment and Inspection of New Deal 18-24* (June 1999).

20.7 All ES contracts for sub-contractors contain ten generic standards with which providers have to comply. These relate to equal opportunities, health and safety, etc.

21 Quality standards in local-authority provision

21.1 Information, advice and guidance for learning and work for adults are delivered by a number of local-authority departments. The most common are:

a The library (or library and information) service.

b The adult and/or community education service.

c Discrete adult guidance services (or educational guidance services for adults) managed by the local authority.

21.2 These services will be required over the next two or three years to address the requirements of the "Best Value" initiative, which is already having an impact on the library services. Every local-authority service will have to undergo a Best Value review at least once every five years. This will normally be followed by an external inspection by the Best Value Inspectorate of the Audit Commission, which has the authority to recommend ministerial intervention should it be deemed necessary. Accordingly, every local authority service will be addressing the four "C"s of Best Value:

a *Challenge:* is the service necessary or can a better way be found to reach the same objectives?

b *Consult:* what do the stakeholders, especially users and citizens, think of the service and where it can be improved? The business community and potential suppliers/providers should also be consulted.

c *Compare:* how does the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the service compare to other services, and what lessons can be learnt?

d *Compete:* not necessarily market testing but certainly benchmarking against others, and consideration of partnerships and what is necessary to "grow the market".

All of these have to contribute to a process (the fifth "C") of "Continuous Improvement". Best Value reviews must be reflected in the Local Performance Plans which local authorities are now under a statutory obligation to produce. Best Value itself becomes a legal requirement on 1 April 2000.

21.3 Best Value is likely to lead to an increased emphasis on self-assessment, cost control, value for money and quality improvement, as providers benchmark their own provision against services delivered elsewhere.

21.4 Both adult education services, and Educational Guidance Services for Adults where they still exist as separate entities, have contributed to the development of local quality standards (see Section 24). Some have achieved national awards, such as Charter Mark.

21.5 Adult education is inspected by OFSTED. The inspection framework, originally published in 1994, was revised in 1997. One of its evaluation criteria is "the quality of guidance and learning support arrangements, prior to, during and on completion of programmes". Evidence for this is sought from interviews with staff and students, as well as from other data sources (e.g. relating to retention and follow-up).

21.6 The Library Association has produced a Charter for Public Library Services. This was conceived as a core document which local-authority public library services could tailor to their own circumstances. Although there is no central record of which authorities have produced customer charters, the majority of library services are likely to have one (or something very similar).

21.7 In a separate initiative, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is developing a set of national standards for public libraries in England. The Library Association is a sponsor of this project. A draft set of standards covering basic aspects of service provision – opening hours, book funds, ICT provision, staffing, user satisfaction, etc. – are currently being issued for consultation. A draft set will then be issued in May 2000 for piloting in 2000/01, with the aim of becoming statutory in 2001/02. The standards are aimed at defining what a "comprehensive and efficient service" means in terms of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, and to give the Minister a framework for deciding whether intervention is required. Care is being taken to ensure that the standards are consistent with Best Value. There are signs that the standards will be used by the Audit Commission in their Best Value inspections of library services.

21.8 A number of libraries have applied for IiP status, but no records on this are held centrally by the Library Association. Similarly, a number have gained Charter Mark awards: approximately 20 have done so in the last three years (13% of the 149 public library authorities in England).

22 Quality standards in community-based provision

22.1 According to *The UK Voluntary Sector Almanac 1998/99*, less than 25% of all UK voluntary organisations employ paid staff. Unpublished research undertaken by the Quality Standards Steering Group of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) in 1999 across a broad range of organisations (not just those delivering information, advice and guidance for learning and work) indicated a clear link between the level of income and the use of quality systems by voluntary and community-sector agencies: a third of those with income under £100,000 were not working to any system, whereas this was the case in only 8% of organisations with an income of over £5 million. Furthermore, since this was a self-selected sample (with a response rate of 40%) employing relatively high numbers of paid staff, one might assume that the number of small agencies with lower turnover – and of agencies more heavily reliant on volunteers – which have adopted a quality system may be considerably lower.

22.2 This research also indicated that the use of quality systems in the sector is a relatively new phenomenon: 82% had been using a system for less than 2 years, and 60% were either just starting or had been using a system for less than a year. Nearly half of the respondents were using IiP, about 15% the EFQM excellence model and about 17% the Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO) (a quality-assurance framework developed by the voluntary sector for use within the sector: the number using this are likely to increase, given its relatively recent introduction). About 35% belonged to a support network for quality improvement: this may reflect the experience of the sector in networking and mutual support, often facilitated by a local umbrella organisation such as a volunteer bureau.

22.3 The National Association of Volunteer Bureaux has issued a set of quality standards which, whilst covering some generic aspects and principles of service delivery (e.g. commitment to equal opportunities), relate specifically to practice within the context of a volunteer bureau.

22.4 The National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (NACAB) has been preparing a quality-assurance system for local Citizens Advice Bureaux, the final version of which is being published in April 2000. It focuses on the following aspects:

a the membership agreement;

b the standard and type of service delivered;

c the quality of advice provided to the local community;

d the organisation and management of the bureau.

The system draws heavily on PQASSO, and also links through to the Community Legal Service standards, developed by the Lord Chancellor's Department for application to generic information and advice provision. Citizens Advice Bureaux will produce portfolios of evidence through a self-assessment process, which will then be audited through site visits by audit teams. Staff competence will be assured through accreditation by Open College Networks.

22.5 Factors encouraging the adoption of quality systems in the voluntary sector include:

a Increasing emphasis on customer satisfaction and participation.

b Regulatory and legal requirements.

c Organisations' search for recognition for their work.

23 Quality standards in private-sector guidance and employment agencies

23.1 Private-sector agencies delivering guidance-related products and services (e.g career development activities, outplacement work or CV production) are not currently regulated in any way. Practitioners may however belong to professional bodies such as the Institute of Personnel and Development (IPD) or the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC), and work to the codes of practice or conduct adopted by them. IPD, for example, has drafted standards in its code of conduct specifically for career management and outplacement agencies. These cover:

a The business relationship (with a third party).

b The professional relationship (good practice in dealing with the client, including respecting confidentiality, a requirement to act in the best interest of the client, and the need to disclose conflicts of interest).

23.2 Those practitioners delivering psychometric testing should be appropriately trained and accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS).

23.3 A small number of private-sector providers which worked within such publicly-funded initiatives as Gateways to Learning and Skill Choice (see 24.2) may have adopted local codes of practice and standards.

23.4 Some private-sector providers seek customer feedback on the services provided. Such feedback is likely to reflect the range of service delivery, including assistance with networking, image consultancy and self marketing.

23.5 Employment agencies are regulated by the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations 1976. The Department of Trade and Industry has recently issued a consultation document on new draft regulations.

24 Partnership arrangements

24.1 Adult guidance in the UK is characterised by multi-agency networks, which encompass a range of providers including the public and quasi-public sectors, voluntary and community groups, and some private-sector provision. Some of these are core providers of information, advice and guidance on learning and work (e.g. careers service companies); others have a broader focus (libraries, colleges, etc.). Whilst many of these agencies have gained national quality awards (e.g. Charter Mark) individually, in some areas much effort has also been devoted by local networks to the development of quality standards.

24.2 A number of pilot initiatives funded by DfEE and delivered through TECs in the early 1990s – notably Gateways to Learning and Skill Choice - promoted the development of local quality standards. By the mid-1990s, the majority of TECs had received funding to develop guidance provision within the Gateways to Learning programme. This included three core elements:

a Network development.

b A clear statement of client entitlement or service.

c The development of a quality strategy.

24.3 Most of the networks established through the Gateway to Learning initiative drafted quality standards: the extent of development was however variable. In those areas where the initial funding and support for co-ordination and networking activities continued and the networks remained, the standards tended to be implemented and an assessment process developed. Elsewhere, once the pump-priming funding ceased and was not replaced, networking activities became more informal and the development and maintenance of local quality standards generally declined.

24.4 An example of a network approach to developing standards was the North West Standards. Within the Gateways to Learning programme, the TECs in the North West of England developed a set of quality standards for providers covering information, advice, guidance and assessment. The inclusion of assessment activities in the framework enabled training providers delivering pre-entry assessment and exit guidance to be included in the framework, as well as agencies delivering information, advice and in-depth guidance. Providers produced portfolios of evidence, which were checked against the standards by external assessors to identify where the standards were not being met. A quality-improvement action plan was then produced, to be implemented within an agreed timescale. A second verification audit was subsequently undertaken to ensure that the standards were being met. The kite-mark was then awarded.

24.5 A second example was the Kent Guidance Network standards. Providers in Kent set up the network and agreed a common Code of Practice and Standards of Service. The eleven core standards have linked performance indicators, which are sector-specific. A four-stage assessment and accreditation process has been designed:

a After an initial briefing, an internal co-ordinator undertakes a pre-assessment exercise to compare current practice to the standards and performance indicators, from which a development plan is agreed.

b The internal co-ordinator compiles a portfolio of evidence, cross-referencing the evidence against the standards and performance indicators.

c Feedback on the portfolio is also provided by a peer assessor.

d When the agency is ready, a peer assessor and external assessor visit to inspect the portfolio and interview the internal co-ordinator.

24.6 Elsewhere, impetus for the drafting of standards came from practitioners and service managers, prompted by an increasing interest in quality and standards in the field, and the publication of relevant frameworks and policy statements (notably Rivis & Sadler, 1991; ICG/NAEGA, 1992).

25 Quality standards in Wales

25.1 The 8 careers service companies in Wales work to the national service specifications provided in the *Requirements and Guidance for Providers*, published by DfEE to specify the services which a careers service provider must offer to the core client group (see 19.1). This requires that these services be provided to an acceptable standard.

25.2 In addition, in 1999 the careers service companies committed themselves to working to the EFQM excellence model. They have trained internal assessors, have each undertaken an initial assessment, and have produced an initial action plan. The inspection function in Wales has been taken over by Estyn (Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales) which – rather than undertaking theme inspections – is embarking on a cycle of full inspections for each company, encompassing all the activities they undertake. An inspection framework has been agreed with providers.

25.3 In Wales adult guidance is delivered by local guidance networks, managed by TECs, working with a range of providers (careers service companies, further education, higher education, community-based agencies, etc.) to deliver information, advice and guidance in the community. In February 2000, the Welsh Assembly approved the creation of Careers Wales, bringing together the eight careers service companies. Careers Wales will take over the responsibilities of managing the adult guidance networks from the TECs when these disappear in April 2001, and (as noted in 6.3a) will provide an all-age guidance service.

25.4 The Welsh Assembly determines the policy, resourcing, and eligibility criteria for provision within the TEC networks. Information and advice are available free of charge to any adult; in-depth guidance is only currently provided free to the unemployed, but it is hoped to extend this to the low paid when Careers Wales is launched. The range of providers currently delivering information, advice and guidance to adults will remain.

25.5 The TECs have set up an All Wales IAG Network which meets three times per year. Its remit is to exchange good practice and to agree priorities for on-going quality development. Within this

group, TEC area representatives have developed a set of All Wales Quality Standards, to which all the networks will be working. These have been mapped against the Guidance Council Quality Standards to ensure consistency. A good-practice guide is also being drafted. A tool for self-assessment was developed in 1998/99, and is being used by providers in 2000. All agencies across Wales will be assisted by an independent consultant to identify the extent to which they meet the standards, to determine priorities for development, and to agree an action plan. A series of workshops are being run in local networks as part of this process.

26 Quality standards in Scotland

26.1 Career guidance for young people is provided in Scotland through a statutory duty placed on the First Minister, and discharged by 17 careers service companies owned exclusively by local authorities and local enterprise companies (LECs). Some but not all of these also deliver information, advice and guidance for adults. A review of the Careers Service is currently under way in Scotland: the report is due in June 2000. The remit includes considering the nature and outcomes of career guidance provision, and the need for an all-age service. The statute determining the provision of career guidance, and the resources allocated for this purpose, can be amended by the Scottish Parliament.

26.2 Statutory provision for young people is quality-assured through the Scottish Quality Management System (SQMS): an organisational development framework designed to support continuous quality improvement. Originally designed for training provision, the version applied to the Careers Service includes generic standards (e.g. relating to staff development, and to health and safety) and one additional standard relating to careers service delivery. Companies are independently audited on a three-year cycle, and undertake a self-assessment process as a preparation for inspection: this reduces the amount of time spent on the audit and promotes a culture of self-assessment. A specialist unit has been established to ensure:

a The ongoing development and updating of the standards.

b That inspectors adhere consistently to the standards.

26.3 Babcock International won a competitive tendering exercise to deliver the full range of auditing services to organisations seeking SQMS accreditation. Operating under the title of SQMS Scotland, it is now the sole supplier of such auditing services. The service was previously free, but is now based on charges of £375 per day (+ VAT) per auditor, plus expenses. The auditing process is paid for directly by providers. Within the SQMS model, providers are encouraged to seek the views of service users, but are not required to do so.

26.4 Information, advice and guidance provision for adults is delivered by a diverse range of agencies within 17 networks, established in 1997 with funding from the former Scottish Office, covering the same geographical areas as the careers service companies. In addition, a telephone helpline is provided by Learndirect Scotland.

26.5 In 1998, the Scottish Executive established a Scottish Guidance Group which has brought together representatives from the adult guidance field in Scotland and other interested parties. The group, which has a remit to consider staff development, quality standards and marketing, is due to terminate its work in spring 2000, but a successor body to represent the interests of adult guidance may be established to continue the work. One possibility is that a Scottish Guidance Council be established (*Adult Guidance in Scotland*, No. 3, December 1999).

26.6 There are currently no common quality standards for adult guidance services in Scotland. Networks are however expected to be required to work to standards in the future, and are these are being drafted: the Guidance Council's standards are acknowledged to be "the most comprehensive in relation to the delivery of guidance", but other models are also being considered (*Adult Guidance in Scotland*, No. 2, July 1999).

26.7 The Scottish Guidance Group has established a sub-group on quality, which has met several times, and has identified the following key principles in their approach to establishing standards for adult guidance:

a Standards which are nationally recognised but not nationally enforced.

b Flexibility, to offer a tiered approach, and enable those with SQMS to add on any required standards.

c Standards adaptable enough to encompass varying resource levels – smaller organisations could not fund SQMS.

26.8 The secretariat to the Scottish Guidance Group reported:

> "There is a desire for a nationally recognised quality standard for the delivery of guidance, but not one that carries with it some form of national enforcement. Firstly, we do not have the resources for a body such as the Careers and Educational Guidance Accreditation Board, which is being established in England. Also, most people I have spoken to do not want this kind of formal external verification, but do recognise the importance of having an agreed standard for guidance"
>
> *(Adult Guidance in Scotland*, No. 2, July 1999*).*

26.9 A Code of Practice for Adult Guidance Networks and their members has been introduced. The Code is designed as a template to establish baseline quality standards for members and is tiered in relation to the services provided by the network member. Quality standards for networks themselves have also been introduced and are being built into the delivery plans currently being developed by the networks. These standards are not, however, concerned with the delivery of guidance.

26.10 The Scottish Guidance Group has decided that instead of seeking to introduce a national accreditation system for the delivery of guidance, members should be required to meet an appropriate existing quality-standard system such as SQMS. They have not as yet decided what other systems might be appropriate. Various means of verifying whether members have achieved an appropriate system have been discussed, such as peer assessment and internal auditing by HMI. In February 2000 this was still under discussion.

27 Quality standards in Northern Ireland

27.1 In Northern Ireland the equivalent of the Careers Service is delivered by the Guidance Service, with the head of the service working within the DHFETE Employment and Guidance Policy Branch. The adoption of the Guidance Council's Quality Standards is being considered by the Guidance Service. Three is a network of 33 Jobcentres, within which NVQ Level 3 in Guidance is being piloted for personal advisers.

27.2 The Educational Guidance Service for Adults (EGSA) in Belfast has responsibility for bringing adult providers into regional networks, and is looking to implement the Guidance Council standards with providers by June 2001. Mystery shopping in Northern Ireland may pose challenges, given the close-knit nature of the communities.

28 Quality standards in the wider international context

28.1 We are not aware of any other country that has done as much work as the UK on quality standards in relation to guidance for learning and work. There has been some interest elsewhere, especially in the Netherlands, where the Central Service Centre (LDC) stimulated some European-level discussion of quality issues (Bartholomeus *et al.*, 1995): these did not however lead to significant action. It is relevant to note that, alongside the UK, the Netherlands is the country where quasi-market approaches have been applied most strongly in the guidance field (see 7.2).

28.2 The International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (see 7.3) developed in the mid-1990s a set of ethical standards. These cover:

a Acceptance of the rights of the individual to make independent choices without coercion.

b The provision of equal opportunities in educational and vocational guidance.

c Referral where practitioners do not have the necessary expertise.

d Details of how services are provided and any constraints.

e The use of appropriate language and provision of clear information.

f The use of new techniques and technologies.

g The avoidance of conflicts of interest, which might compromise the best interests of clients.

IAEVG has recently set up a working group to draft international standards for guidance counsellors: this work is at an early stage.

29 Conclusion

29.1 We noted earlier (8.3) that the Guidance Council Quality Standards and the Guidance Accreditation Board's accreditation processes could be a powerful instrument for harmonisation across the guidance sector. We also noted (13.9) that if these standards and processes are to be extensively used outside the adult guidance field where they are now officially endorsed, they will almost certainly need to be reconciled with the existing quality arrangements in the respective sectors.

29.2 Accordingly, a key strategic issue for the Council and the Board is to determine the extent to which they:

a Confine their attention to implementing the standards within the adult guidance field in England.

b Seek also to explore ways of implementing the standards in other guidance sectors in England, either directly or (more likely) through negotiation with those responsible for existing inspection/quality-assurance arrangements.

c Seek also to explore the potential for implementing the standards in other parts of the United Kingdom.

d Seek also to explore the potential for exporting the standards internationally.

References

Bartholomeus, Y., Brongers, E. & Kristensen, S. (eds.) (1995). *The Quest for Quality – Towards Joint European Quality Norms*. Leeuwarden, Netherlands: LBC National Careers Guidance Information Centre.

Clements, S., Fiehn, J. & Miller, A. (1999). *Excellence in Work-Related Learning Award*. London: Focus Central London.

Department for Education and Employment (1996). *Better Choices: Quality in Careers Education and Guidance*. London: DfEE.

Department for Education and Employment (1999a). *Local Information, Advice and Guidance for Adults in England – Towards a National Framework*. London: DfEE.

Department for Education and Employment (1999b). *Careers Education and Guidance in the Further Education Sector – a Report on a Joint DfEE/FEFC Inspection Survey of Careers Education and Guidance*. London: DfEE.

Department for Education and Employment (2000). *ConneXions: the Best Start in Life for Every Young Person*. London: DfEE.

Donoghue, J. (1996). *Local Quality Standards for Careers Education and Guidance*. London: Department for Education and Employment.

Further Education Funding Council (1997a). *Careers Education and Guidance: Good Practice Report*. Coventry: FEFC.

Further Education Funding Council (1997b). *Validating Self-Assessment*. Circular 97/12. Coventry: FEFC.

Further Education Funding Council (2000). *Careers Education and Guidance: Making a Difference*. Coventry: FEFC.

Further Education Unit (1993). *Quality in Guidance for Adults*. London: FEU.

Hawthorn, R. (1995). *First Steps: a Quality Standards Framework for Guidance Across all Sectors*. London: RSA/NACCEG.

Institute of Careers Guidance & National Association for Educational Guidance for Adults (1992). *A Guidance Entitlement for Adults*. Stourbridge: ICG.

Miller, A. (1999). *Excellence in Mentoring*. London: Focus Central London.

Office for Standards and Education (1998). *National Survey of Careers Education and Guidance*. London: OFSTED.

Rivis, V. & Sadler, J. (1991). *The Quest for Quality in Educational Guidance for Adults*. Leicester: National Institute for Adult Continuing Education.

Sadler, J. & Reisenberger, A. (1997). *On Course for Next Steps: Careers Education and Guidance for Students in FE*. London: Further Education Development Agency.

Standing Conference of Associations for Guidance in Educational Settings (1993). Statement of principles and definitions. In Ball, C. (ed.): *Guidance Matters: Developing a National Strategy for Guidance in Learning and Work*. London: RSA.

Training Standards Council (1998). *Guidelines for Self-Assessment and Inspection of Work-Based Training*. Oxford: TSC.

Unit for the Development of Adult Continuing Education (1986). *The Challenge of Change*. Leicester: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education.

Watts, A.G. (1997). *Strategic Directions for Careers Services in Higher Education*. NICEC Project Report. Cambridge: Careers Research and Advisory Centre.

Watts, A.G., Law, B., Killeen, J., Kidd, J.M. & Hawthorn, R. (1996). *Rethinking Careers Education and Guidance: Theory, Policy and Practice*. London: Routledge.

Glossary

ACACHE	Association of Careers Advisers in Colleges of Higher Education
AGCAS	Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services
AMOSSHE	Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education
BPS	British Psychological Society
CEG	careers education and guidance
CEIG	careers education, information and guidance
CQI	continuous quality improvement
CSNA	Careers Services National Association
CSQAPM	Careers Service Quality Assurance Provider Management
CV	curriculum vitae
DENI	Department of Education in Northern Ireland
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DHFETE	Department of Higher Education, Training and Employment (Northern Ireland)
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
EGSA	Educational Guidance Service for Adults
ES	Employment Service
FEDA	Further Education Development Agency
FEFC	Further Education Funding Council
GAB	Guidance Accreditation Board
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
IAEVG	International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance
IAG	information, advice and guidance
IAGA	information, advice and guidance for adults
ICG	Institute of Careers Guidance
ICT	information and communication technologies
IiP	Investors in People
ILA	individual learning accounts
IPD	Institute for Personnel and Development
LEA	Local Education Authority
LEC	Local Enterprise Company
NACCEG	National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance
NACGT	National Association of Careers and Guidance Teachers
NAEGA	National Association for Educational Guidance for Adults
NAMSS	National Association of Managers of Student Services
NAPCE	National Association for Pastoral Care in Education
NICEC	National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling
NTO	National Training Organisation
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PQASSO	Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
QAF	quality-assurance framework
SCAGES	Standing Conference of Associations for Guidance in Educational Settings
SQMS	Scottish Quality Management System
TEC	Training and Enterprise Council
TQASM	TEC Quality Assurance and Supplier Management